

# The Elementary ENGLISH REVIEW

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## AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND STATESMEN IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS<sup>1</sup>

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FEBRUARY, the month of Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and St. Valentine suggests a plethora of school assemblies, and class room projects with the consequent anxious search for "new" material: anecdotes, poems, and facts. New or old, the story and poem designed for special occasions quite as often as not, lacks distinction in expression, and appreciation of the actual personality of the subject. The familiar problem of ill-regulated co-ordination between supply and demand exists just as surely in the holiday book section of school or public library as in the field of economics. Is it possible to solve the book difficulty by widening the range of demand to include related subjects, and at the same time broadening instead of narrowing children's interests? In other words, February might become bookishly, statesmen's and soldiers' month rather than the month of Lincoln and Washington alone.

Of the volumes written about Lincoln, Carl Sandburg's *ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE PRAIRIE YEARS* stands out with startling distinctness for its vivid background and the genuineness of the personality that emerges from it. Anecdotes, homely and familiar, assume new meaning in this setting while facts slide into their proper place under the vigorous treatment. Here, at last, is a Lincoln to believe in—"He found his life thrown in ways where there was a certain chance for a certain growth. And so he grew. Silence found him; he met silence. In the making of him as he was, the element of silence was immense." If this biography, rich as it is in treasure, seems a large or formidable dose for children, no one need be dismayed while within reach is to be found ABE

LINCOLN GROWS UP, a book consisting of the first twenty-seven chapters taken from the original *PRAIRIE YEARS*.

So buoyant a life of George Washington has still to be written, but to show him as true man and not mere prig or pattern, there is Hill's *ON THE TRAIL OF WASHINGTON*. While reading about Washington it is interesting to turn to the book which meant so much to young Abe Lincoln, Parson Weems' *LIFE* and to find there the "Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honorable to Himself and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen," which have figured in many biographies since but without the enthusiasm unrestrained by any fear of facts not perfectly authenticated—"Such was the effect of Washington's policy; the divine policy of doing good for evil. It melted down his iron enemies into golden friends. It caused the Hessian soldiers to join with the American Farmers!—not only so, but to write such letters to their countrymen, that they were constantly breaking loose from the British to run over to the Americans—insomuch that in a little time the British would hardly trust a Hessian to stand sentinel!"

Perhaps not less important than Washington to every American was Benjamin Franklin for his part in securing independence for the United States and establishing it as a nation. In simple, graphic manner, touched with a dry humor, Franklin's *AUTOBIOGRAPHY* tells of his boyhood and his early struggles to make his way. "I began to live very agreeably, for they all respected me the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and that from me they learned something daily." As a picture of pre-revolutionary life and thought it is admirable; and as a piece of source material it is neither too difficult nor beyond the interest of boys and girls. "My brother had in 1720 or 1721 begun to print a newspaper . . . I remember his being dissuaded by some of his friends from

<sup>1</sup>This is the sixth article in a series published under the direction of the Chairman of the Book Evaluation Committee of the Children's Librarians' Section of the American Library Association, Miss Helen Martin. There are ten articles in the series.

the undertaking as not likely to succeed, one newspaper being in their judgment, enough for America. At this time, 1771, there are not less than five and twenty."

Another indispensable factor in the struggle for independence was the help given by Lafayette. Not only were his money, military ability, and influence at home at the disposal of the colonists, but his friendship and loyalty never failed Washington at the time when the commander was hard pressed both within and without the army. Of the several biographies of Lafayette, two most interesting and sympathetic are the *SWORD OF LIBERTY* by Hutchins and *THE BOY'S LIFE OF LAFAYETTE* by Helen Nicolay. Each shows how his love of freedom and belief in political liberty made him a rebel all his days, and emphasizes the disinterestedness of his service to America. "The moment I knew America was fighting for freedom, I burnt with a desire to bleed for her; and the moment I shall be able to serve her at any time, or in any part of the world, will be the happiest one of my life."

Admiring Washington if not loving him as did Lafayette, Alexander Hamilton is too significant a member of that official family to be omitted from any study dealing with the group around Washington during the war and, after. Consequently *THE BOYS' LIFE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON* by Helen Nicolay, the first biography for young people on this subject, is very timely and acceptable. Besides telling in brisk fashion the colorful story of this most brilliant statesman, she presents manners and events in New York and in the new government in such fashion as to give a vivid picture of those difficult years. "He gave hope to discouraged people, instilled confidence in minds tortured by fear; and showing thirteen separate and jarring states where their mutual interests lay, persuaded them to sink jealousies and work together."

Daniel Boone was three years younger than Washington, and led a life of adventure in the wilderness. There he studied the ways of Indians and fought them successfully, bringing his skill to the defense of the frontier when it was threatened by the English and their Indian allies during the Revolution. In Stewart Edward White's *DANIEL BOONE*, the wilderness scene is reproduced boldly and the character of the great scout made to live again as "one ordained by God to open a wilderness to a people." "I was never lost," said he, "but I was bewildered once for three days."

Seventy-five years later in surroundings not unlike Abraham Lincoln's, Kit Carson, too, was born in Kentucky. What the circumstances were which sent him westward, exploring new country, instead of studying the disturbed conditions in the old, is told by J. S. C. Abbott's *CHRISTOPHER CARSON*. The opening of the Southwest was no small undertaking and to read of it stirs and thrills the imagination, at the same time bringing this part of history into its proper relationship with the events in the east, particularly the Civil War.

Apart from Lincoln, to boys and girls the most interesting figures of this period are Ulysses Grant and Robert E. Lee. Alike and yet unlike, their lives and their careers inevitably suggest comparison, while the coincidence and seeming cross purposes of some of their ideas offer material for thought. "At or about the time when Lee's family was ceasing to own slaves, Grant's family acquired some," says Hill in his book *ON THE TRAIL OF GRANT AND LEE*. This same book explains the campaigns, in which the two commanders were opposed, and does full justice to the fine qualities of each. It has several most dramatic passages, and now and then a touch of humor to lighten up the grimness of much fighting. *THE BOYS' LIFE OF GRANT*, by Nicolay, based on Grant's own *MEMOIRS*, is a simple, direct biography well suited to boys' reading, and explains at once the secret of those two initials "U. S." which has bothered many a reader. Hamilton's *LIFE OF ROBERT E. LEE* is harder reading, but worth while for its emphasis on the fact that Lee was above all a great American, a hero not alone for the South.

No study of statesmen or soldiers would be complete without reference to Theodore Roosevelt or to his admiration for Lincoln. His *LETTERS TO CHILDREN* reveal this attitude as truly as his pleasure in his family and his strenuous efforts to be a worthy president. "It is a great comfort to me," he wrote Kermit, "to read the life and letters of Abraham Lincoln. I am more and more impressed every day, not only with the man's wonderful power and sagacity, but with his literally endless patience, and at the same time his unflinching resolution." To Ted he wrote, "I am trying to keep steadily in mind that I must not only be as resolute as Abraham Lincoln in seeking to achieve decent ends, but as patient, as uncomplaining and as even-tempered . . ."

# WHAT TO EMPHASIZE IN THE NEW POETRY FOR A MORE POPULAR APPEAL TO CHILDREN<sup>1</sup>

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THERE is a universal assumption that the story of knowledge at this time must make a popular appeal to the laity. Let us dismiss in this connection the inner idolatry that actuates the pedagogical clique to thumb its nose at all popularizations. They have not yet made the simple discovery that there is a human hunger to know since a surplus of time and money have admitted the common readers to the fraternity of learners. Whether academicians concede the view or not, an observer of the long climb into learning recognizes that the untutored judgment of the average reader is finally conclusive. Popularizations in fields of knowledge are about as hopeful an evidence of the claims of democracy in life as can well be pointed out. Does our assumption in regard to the world of knowledge hold equally in the world of art? Art may be debatable ground, unless the standards of merit can be brought into play so that what is art can measurably be assessed, as knowledge is assessed on the basis of fact. Can the work of the imagination that we call, for example, poetry, be brought into the emotional life of the child? My guess is that it can.

But the problem of doing this is not an easy one in public schools. There are practically no standards of taste for poetry now evident as there are standards for factual truth. Poetry is so intangible. And children have not yet come into their rightful and natural inheritance in poetic language and imagery. Or rather I should say that the truth that every child is potentially a poet and is in love with speaking in poetic phrasing has been systematically worked against by teachers and their imposed duties in and out of class rooms. But the greatest hindrance to this becoming a reality has probably been in the fact that children have not been privileged to read poetry that offers a compelling emotional experience. For this state of affairs there are two reasons. In the first place there has been but a small volume of real poetry available for childhood, and in the second place that small volume has not been easily obtainable.

Poetry is the oldest of literary forms. Yet poetry of interest to childhood is, with one or two exceptions, a creation of the past fifty years. It is as a new form for children akin

to the novel as the newest form for adults, a little over a century old. The diffusion of novels for adults, and even for youth, has become general. Not so with poetry. Save for the charming volumes of Milne, *WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG* and *NOW WE ARE SIX*, books of children's poetry have not been popular sellers. Neither have the older volumes such as the mystical poems in *SONGS OF INNOCENCE* been discovered and used by teachers in the elementary grades. Stevenson has fared the best of all the earlier children's poets. But Blake and Rossetti have remained largely undiscovered. If, as the newer critics aver, Longfellow is not a poet for adults, they should have protested against the tendency to call him the children's poet in America. The claims of Longfellow no doubt have shouldered out the English poets for children—Blake, Christina Rossetti, Robert Louis Stevenson, Walter de la Mare. The latest Britisher, A. A. Milne, has in a measure reached children through their parents, for he appeals also to adults. I sincerely hope the blight of Eddie Guest runs its course with adults in service clubs and does not attack unsuspecting childhood.

At this point I must hoist a flag of warning against the kind of poetry that finds its way into school readers and into plan journals that monthly afflict teachers (The Elementary English Review excepted). I suppose much of the poetry of poor quality gets into readers just as some of the definitions got into Doctor Johnson's *DICTIONARY*. A lady looking for an argument asked Johnson why he defined "pastern" as "the knee of a horse." "Through ignorance, madam, pure ignorance," he replied. Because something set up to look like poetry is printed is no assurance that it is really poetry. Nor in an interesting world of childhood is there any excuse for having primary school plans make doggerel to order and imply that they should be learned by heart on particular occasions. I am against censorship in general; but, in the interests of poetry for children, I have a sneaking sense of hospitality to some pedagogical Watch and Ward Society. That seems to be the last resort, for you cannot remedy the stress either by a protective tariff or by enforcement officers—even under the new administration. Nor can the millions of Henry Ford make a winged horse out of Mary's little lamb.

Now to the topic as assigned me. The very wording of it implies a fatal error in proce-

<sup>1</sup>Read before the Elementary School-Normal School Section, National Council of Teachers of English, December 1, 1928, Baltimore, Maryland.



dure for a worthy end. There is good new poetry for children. It should appeal to them as does anything of popular interest. But does such appeal come through emphasis from teachers? Drill is my idea of standard emphasis. But drill can go forward successfully only when related to factual or uninteresting matter. Let it keep to that field. There is really no such thing as teaching poetry. It was not fabricated out of the upper layers of the poet's imagination in order to be taught in a class-room. It is more like an excursion or travel into a far land, a sweeping realization that there is something in the spirit of the childish reader that he is following a piper at the gates of dawn, that school is no longer keeping. The child has to become A LITTLE BOY LOST galloping over grassy plains, talking to the Old Woman of the Mountains, climbing over the summit and going down to a mysterious sea. It is a refuge from the deluge of facts that are sweeping him along intellectually, it is an emotional confessional. From every excursion into real poetry a child will return refreshed and strengthened. Because of the very joy he experiences, new energy for set tasks will have been liberated. He will have plunged into a Pool of Bethesda and come out quickened emotionally.

It is difficult to scourge the diagrammers and moral-hunters out of the temple of children's poetry. They are the Nemesis of children under a benevolent guise. They are that species of Puritan genus that looks on a child as clay in the potter's hand, to be moulded according to their own notions. They have one object in sight when they start to teach, to impose their own mature view on the child. They cannot even project themselves backward into the experiences of childhood, for they are largely without the faculty of imagination. Symbolism died early in them. Dream days are over. Spontaneity and truthful guessing must be rooted out. The logic of grammar is to be the only language of artistic realization. Patterns in poetry were copyrighted when the gift of tongues was bestowed. Their view is static. Their medium is prose.

What is a poem to a child? It is tactful hints at elusive meanings arranged in such word patterns that they reveal a beauty hitherto unguessed by the child. A teacher might as well dilate on the frost patterns on a pane of glass as a lesson in geometry, as to pull apart the hidden patterns back of the poetic phrasing. One reads in poetry nothing that has not in some way before been experienced. The verses help the child to rearrange in his consciousness what already is there. His joy comes through his own efforts at building in the house of his heart. Bold would be the adult meddler in so beautiful and frail a structure! If the child comes to real-

ize himself in poetry, he must, like BAMBI, go off alone into the woods. A teacher should be little more than a warden to see that no intruder breaks into the solitude where the child is eating his PEACOCK PIE, now that he is six.

Let me again propose my favorite thesis in regard to poetry for children: Bring the child and the book of verse together under pleasant reading conditions and then let time and his own experience do the rest. That is about all that can be done anyhow. The child is probably about right the way God made him. The thing in hand is for the teacher to find poetry that is all right the way a real poet made it. Let the two meet. If poetry does not naturally interest him at his age, do not kick against the pricks, for poetry is really food for the minority. The great majority lumber through life without it. If the poetry does stir the child's interest, weave a circle around him to keep out intrusions while he feeds on honeydew.

There are a few things to point out in the new poetry that are worth thinking about. The same is true of the older poetry, for it is my guess that it was once new itself—and a theme for discussion in Council meetings. In the first place the language of the new poetry, let us say in Milne or Lindsay, is the language of every day life. The ideas are capable of being realized in experience. But there has been more self-determination in patterns, more of deft catching of natural rhythm that is by instinct latent in all children. It seems nearer to the child's own world, though in truth there is as much gold in it as is fabled to be at the end of the rainbow. Because it is thus, a child starting on the newer poetry is more likely to range farther in lands of the imagination, once he feels the urge to start. In the second place the new poetry seems more unconventional, requiring less of formal procedure on the part of the child. There is more of action in it, more of dramatic situation. Even the mysticism of De la Mare has the semblance of the concrete, is more tangible because of its creatures behaving as they do. The new poetry is a poetry of joy in life, of goodness that is natural and genuine. It is free from *cliche*, is just spontaneous talk. Much of it has been written for what it is, not purposely for children. Grown-ups do enjoy Milne, Walter de la Mare, James Stephens, Robert Louis Stevenson, Hillaire Belloc. A child can visualize Carl Sandburg's "Fog": so can an adult. The cadenced movement of Lindsay's Moon verse is not alien to the adult who has fed on Hebrew poetry and did not know it.

I believe in emphasizing but two things in regard to new or old poetry, and both of these with tactful restraint. Suggestion is the

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## REFERENCES FOR FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

**MILDRED KRISE**  
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**H**ERE is a list of stories, poetry and other material that may be useful to teachers who are seeking to give these celebrated birthdays their full measure of significance and dignity.

### I. FESTIVALS.

*Needham: FOLK FESTIVALS.* (A useful book for teachers). Washington's Birthday—When first celebrated—Some incidents suggested for festivals.

### II. STORIES.

*Bailey, C. S.: LINCOLN TRUE STORIES.*

(A delightful book for young readers.)

Grades 2-3

*Bailey, C. S.: STORIES FOR EVERY*

HOLIDAY . . . . . Grades 5-6

—Lincoln's Birthday, 128

—Washington's Birthday, 149.

*Bemis, Holtz and Smith: THE*

PATRIOTIC READER . . . . . Grades 4-6

—Washington; Eliza Cook, 66.

—Washington; Anonymous, 67.

—A. Lincoln; J. R. Lowell, 68.

—O Captain! My Captain!; W. Whitman, 77.

—Lincoln As a Typical American; P. Brooks, 70.

—Lincoln, the Man of the People; E. Markham, 75.

—Their Monument in Our Hearts; Viviani, 78.

—Gettysburg Address; A. Lincoln, 96.

*Curtis: WHY WE CELEBRATE OUR*

HOLIDAYS . . . . . Grades 3-4

(This book gives the origin of several holidays).

—Lincoln's Birthday, 12.

—Washington's Birthday, 18.

*Downing and Bemis: STORIES OF*

PATRIOTISM . . . . . Grades 5-8

"A good selection of stories and verse about heroes and heroines of American history from the Colonial Times through the World War."

—G. Washington, the Young Soldier; E. M. Tappan, 23.

—A Winter At Valley Forge; E. M. Tappan, 57.

*Denton: NEW YEARS TO CHRISTMAS IN HOLIDAY LAND . . . . .* Grades 3-5

—Lincoln's Birthday, 19.

—Gettysburg Address, 34.

—Washington's Birthday, 43.

—Address to His Troops; G. Washington, 58.

*Dickinson, (ed): CHILDREN'S BOOK OF PATRIOTIC STORIES. . . . .* Grades 4-8

"Interesting collection of American stories useful to the story-teller. The stories for older and younger children are especially designated good reference material."

—Tony's Birthday and George Washington's; A. Repplier, 138.

—Washington and the Spy; J. F. Cooper, 227.

*Evans: WORTHWHILE STORIES FOR EVERY DAY . . . . .* Grades 5-6

—Abraham Lincoln, 281.

—The Boyhood of G. Washington, 315.

*Hour: BOON OF PATRIOTISM . . . . .* Grades 6-8

—The Character of Washington; E. Whipple, 268.

—Gettysburg Address; A. Lincoln, 378.

—Abraham Lincoln; Tom Taylor, 384.

*Mabic: MEN WHO HAVE RISEN, Grades 6-8*

—Abraham Lincoln, 327.

(Authentic).

*McSpadden: THE BOOK OF HOLIDAYS*

. . . . . Grades 4-6

"The origin and customs together with the usual customs of celebration in this country, of twenty holidays, seven of which are not included in 'Our Holidays.' 'Our Holidays' has a less formal arrangement and poems with the holiday as a background, and tells of Whittier's and Longfellow's birthdays which are not included in this volume."

—Lincoln's Birthday, 17.

—Washington's Birthday, 51.

*Miriam: THE BOYHOOD OF WASHINGTON*

. . . . . Grades 2-3

"A splendid biography for young readers."

*Olcott: GOOD STORIES FOR GREAT*

## BIRTHDAYS . . . . . Grades 4-8

"Over two hundred stories celebrating twenty-three great birthdays of patriots, founders and upbuilders of the republic of both North and South America. Tersely told stories, not easily found elsewhere, all contributing vividly to the history of the hero."

—Oh, Slow to Smite and Swift to Spare, 174.

—The Cabin in the Clearing, 175.

—Off to New Orleans, 177.

—The Kindness of Lincoln, 178.

—Lincoln and the Children, 181.

—The President and the Bible, 183.

—Washington and Lincoln Speak, 185.

—Gettysburg Address, 186.

—Lincoln on Washington's Birthday, 190.

—The Boy in the Valley, 191.

—Washington's Mother, 194.

—Washington and the Children, 197.

—The Little Girl and the Red Coals, 200.

—Nellie and Little Washington, 200.

—Seeing the President, 203.

—and others.

## Olcott: GOOD STORIES FOR GREAT

## HOLIDAYS . . . . . Grades 5-6

"Collection of 120 stories taken from many sources and arranged for children's own reading and story-telling. Collections for seventeen holidays."

—He Rescues the Birds, 27.

—Lincoln and the Little Girl, 27.

—Training for the Presidency, 28.

—Why Lincoln Was Called "Honest Abe," 30.

—A Stranger at Five Points, 31.

—A Solomon Come to Judgment, 33.

—Lincoln, the Lawyer, 34.

—Mr. Lincoln and the Bible, 36.

—Three Old Tales, 59.

—Young George and the Colt, 62.

—Washington, the Athlete, 64.

—Washington's Modesty, 66.

—Washington at Yorktown, 67.

## Poulson: IN THE CHILD'S WORLD

## . . . . . Grades 1-2

"Morning talks and stories for kindergarten, primary schools and homes."

—Washington's Birthday, 197.

## Roosevelt, T., Southey, Putnam, Brooks, and Others: STORIES OF THE REPUBLIC

## . . . . . Grades 6-8

—The Youth of Abraham Lincoln; N. Brooks, 206.

—When Lincoln Was Inaugurated; N. Brooks, 243.

—Lincoln's Address at Gettysburg; N. Brooks, 341.

## Schauffler (ed): LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY

## . . . . . Grades 5-8

"Good collection for school use with selections in prose and poetry."

## Schauffler (ed): WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY

## . . . . . Grades 5-8

"Essays, orations, poems, stories, and exercises which exhibit the modern conception of Washington, together with a selection from his own writings and the finest of the older tributes."

## Stevenson, E. B. and B. E.: DAYS AND DEEDS (Prose) . . . . . Grades 5-7

"Selections from a wide range of writers on American holidays, special days, great Americans and seasons."

—Washington's Birthday, 14-27.

—The Birthday of Lincoln, 199-210.

(Several selections under each of these topics.)

## Van Dyke: HISTORIC SCENES IN FICTION

## . . . . . Grades 6-8

—Gen Washington; Wm. M. Thackeray, 330.

## Wickes: HAPPY HOLIDAYS . . . . . Grades 3-5

A collection of poems and stories for American holidays.

—A Little Lad of Long Ago; A. E. Allen, 148.

—Lincoln's Kindness to Animals; E. L. Cabot, 152.

—Lincoln and the Wood Chopper, 154.

—The Soldier's Reprieve, 155.

—Washington's Birthday; M. Sangster, 178.

—The Commander-in-Chief, 179.

—A Charmed Life, 181.

—For Washington's Birthday, 185.

## III. POEMS.

## Adams and McCarrick: HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS . . . . . Grades 3-8

"A collection of poems for all special American days."

—Poems about Lincoln by several authors, 15-33.

—About Washington, 43-56.

## Denton: DENTON'S NEW PROGRAM BOOK

## . . . . . Grades 2-3

—Like Lincoln (a recitation for Lincoln Day), 25.

## O'Neill: RECITATIONS FOR ASSEMBLY AND CLASSROOM . . . . . Grades 1-12

"Selections chiefly from standard

authors. Includes poems for special days."

- Short Tributes to Lincoln, 196.
- A. Lincoln, 197.
- An Anecdote to Lincoln, 197.
- Gettysburg Address, 406.
- Liberty and Union, 395.
- Lincoln, the Man of the People, 195.
- Washington's Farewell Address, 203.
- Washington (Tributes by great men), 198.

*Stevenson, B. E. and E. B.*: DAYS AND DEEDS (Poetry) . . . . Grades 5-6

"Splendid collection. Poems about famous Americans."

- Washington's Birthday; Lord Byron, 11.
- The 22nd of February; W. C. Bryant, 11.
- Ode for Washington's Birthday; Holmes, 12.
- The Name of Washington; Lathrop, 14.
- Washington; W. C. Bryant, 15.
- Crown Our Washington; Butterworth, 17.
- Washington; Bridges, 18.
- A. Lincoln; W. C. Bryant, 194.
- A. Lincoln; Stoddard, 195-196.
- A. Lincoln; Beston, 196.
- On the Life Mask of A. Lincoln; R. W. Gilder, 197.
- Lincoln; J. R. Lowell, 198.

*Thompson*: SILVER PENNIES . Grades 3-5  
"A collection of modern poems."

- Lincoln; J. G. Fletcher, 107.

*Wiggin and Smith*: GOLDEN NUMBERS . . . . Grades 6-8

"One of the best collections of poems ever published for children."

- Washington; J. R. Lowell, 307.
- Old Ironsides; O. Holmes, 312.
- A. Lincoln; Stoddard, 318.
- Lincoln, the Great Commoner; E. Markham, 319.
- A. Lincoln; H. B. Brownell, 321.

*Wynne*: FOR DAYS AND DAYS . Grades 3-5

"An unusually attractive book of children's verses, simple without being trivial."

- A Little Boy and a Cherry Tree, 38.
- Washington, 39.
- Lincoln, 39.
- George Washington, 41.

#### IV. PLAYS.

*Barnum*: SCHOOL PLAYS FOR ALL

OCCASIONS . . . . Grades 6-8

"Short plays suitable for performance by children, written by a teacher in the Brooklyn schools. Each of the more important holidays has a play devoted to it."

- Honest Abe. An Interlude for Lincoln's Birthday, 81.

- Eagle's Feather. A play for Washington's Birthday, 91.

*Hubbard*: CITIZENSHIP PLAYS . Grades 4-6

"Simple plays, suitable for schoolroom production."

- Lincoln, Deputy Surveyor, 283.

*Hubbard*: LITTLE AMERICAN HISTORY

PLAYS FOR LITTLE AMERICANS

. . . . . Grades 4-6

- Our First Flag, 81.
- The First in War, 72.
- The Great General's Lesson to the Little Corporal, 89.
- A Little Life of Lincoln, 139.

*Johnston and Barnum*: BOOK OF PLAYS

FOR LITTLE ACTORS . . . Grades 2-3

One play for each holiday.

- Abraham Lincoln and the Little Bird, 61.
- George Washington and the Cherry Tree, 82.

*Noyes and Ray*: LITTLE PLAYS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE . . . . Grades 3-5

"A useful volume with clear directions for stage settings and costumes."

- Washington's Birthday, 29.

*Payne*: PLAYS FOR ANY CHILD . Grades 4-6

"Morality Plays."

- Lincoln's Birthday—"Any child learns from Lincoln."
- Washington's Birthday—"Washington's message to any child."

*Stevenson, A.*: DRAMATIZED SCENES FROM AMERICAN HISTORY . . . Grades 5-6

"Plays from early American history, accurate, interesting and suitable for reading or acting."

- The Man Who Bore the Burden, or Gen. George Washington, 263.

*Walker*: LITTLE PLAYS FROM AMERICAN HISTORY FOR YOUNG FOLKS . Grades 5-6

"Short, well-constructed plays for children, illustrative of dramatic episodes in American history."

- Four Scenes From the Time of Lincoln. 1. In Boston. (1864), 123. 2. Lincoln and the Little Girl (1850), 131.



3. At the White House (1863), 134.
4. On a Plantation (1863), 145.

#### V. BIOGRAPHY—Individual.

*Baldwin*: ABRAHAM LINCOLN . Grades 5-7  
 "Strong in political history; One of the best books to instill patriotism."

*Bullard*: TAD AND HIS FATHER . Grades 6-8  
 "A very simple narrative telling about the lad who was the constant companion of his father, President Lincoln, during the trying years of the Civil War."

*Mace*: WASHINGTON, A VIRGINIA CAVALIER . . . . . Grades 3-5  
 "Intimate little biography which aims to picture Washington as the plain, simple-minded, dignified man, whom neighbors, relatives, and friends all loved. Numerous illustrations, some rather quaint."

*Mitchell*: THE YOUTH OF WASHINGTON . . . . . Grades 6-8  
 Told in the form of an autobiography.

*Morris*: LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN FOR BOYS AND GIRLS . . . . . Grades 5-7  
 "Gives an excellent insight into the character and personality of Lincoln."

*Scudder*: GEORGE WASHINGTON . . . . . Grades 6-8  
 "One of the best lives of Washington for young readers, and among the best of one-volume lives of Washington for readers of any age."

*Tarbell*: BOY SCOUTS LIFE OF LINCOLN . . . . . Grades 7-8  
 "The author from full knowledge of Lincoln's life has written an impressive, absorbing narrative, emphasizing the fine traits in Lincoln's character which would be an inspiration to boys in their early teens."

*Thayer*: FROM FARM HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE—THE LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON . . . . . Grades 6-8

#### VI. BIOGRAPHY—Collective.

*Baldwin*: FOUR GREAT AMERICANS.  
 Washington, Franklin, Webster, Lincoln.  
 —Washington, 9-69.  
 —Lincoln, 179-235.

*Eggleston*: STORIES OF GREAT AMERICANS . . . . . Grades 3-4  
 "Episodes in the boyhood of Franklin, Boone, Washington, Webster, and others."

—Washington and His Hatchet, 54.  
 —Washington's Christmas Gift, 61.  
 —How Washington Got Out of a Trap, 63.  
 —Washington's Last Battle, 65.

*Gordy*: AMERICAN LEADERS AND HEROES . . . . . Grades 5-6

"Historical reader which makes prominent the personal traits of the leaders."  
 —George Washington, the Virginia Planter and Revolutionary Soldier, 189-210.  
 —Abraham Lincoln, the Liberator of the Slaves, 282-301.

*Mowry*: AMERICAN PIONEERS . Grades 5-6  
 America's great men and their deeds.  
 —Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation, 239.

*Uhrbrock*: FAMOUS AMERICANS . . . . . Grades 5-6  
 —George Washington, 47.  
 —Abraham Lincoln, 288.

*Woodburn and Moran*: MAKERS OF AMERICA . . . . . Grades 5-8

"The purpose of this book is to set forth in simple form the story of some of the most important events and movements in our late history. It deals with certain high spots in our national life."  
 —George Washington, the Pillar of the Republic, 54-87.  
 —Long Live George Washington, President of the United States, 169-180.  
 —Abraham Lincoln, 263-273.

#### VII. HISTORY.

*Bailey*: BOYS' AND GIRLS OF PIONEER DAYS . . . . . Grades 4-6  
 —The Boy Who Guarded Washington, 9-16.  
 —Visiting at Mt. Vernon — George Washington, Farmer, 17-25.  
 —The Boy Who Knew Lincoln, 168-179.

*Dodge*: STORIES OF AMERICAN HISTORY . . . . . Grades 6-8  
 —George Washington, 110-117.

*Elson and Macmillan*: THE STORY OF OUR COUNTRY. Bk. II . . . . . Grades 5-6  
 A reliable history.  
 —President Lincoln, 190.

*Faris*: WHERE OUR HISTORY WAS MADE. Bk. I . . . . . Grades 5-8  
 "Events in American history described

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# LANGUAGE TEXT BOOKS

## A STUDY OF FIVE RECENT SEVENTH GRADE TEXTS

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THE FEBRUARY (1924) issue of the *Elementary School Journal* published "A Study of Twenty-Four Recent Seventh and Eighth Grade Language Texts." This investigation was carried out by a group of graduate students under the direction of Professor R. L. Lyman of the University of Chicago. An intensive analysis of language texts published between 1920 and 1924 was undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining current practice in language-composition teaching. The objectives of the study were incorporated in the following questions: "What is our upper grade language-composition instruction as a whole as embodied in the latest popular and widely used textbooks? What progressive features does that instruction reveal? Are the books consistent with the proposed aims and purposes of the junior high school movement?"

A brief quotation will best sum up the findings of the study. "In general, the language books are still over stressing grammar but are attempting to teach that subject from the functional point of view. Some texts which reduce grammar to sensible proportions find thereby increased opportunity to create expressional situations calling for natural writing and speaking from boys and girls. Moreover, such expressional situations are in a respectable number of cases tied up with the activities of school and home life, with the duties of junior citizens, with the pleasures and recreations of adolescents. Vocational outlooks, at present entirely neglected in these texts, represent a regrettable oversight. Oral composition is not as yet receiving the amount of attention it deserves. . . . The presence of study helps indicate that modern textbooks are making language, as it should be, a 'laboratory' subject, utilizing the social nature of communication to secure and maintain interest and to establish a language conscience." Only one of the books made a respectable attempt to carry that language conscience into situations outside the language class.

*Objectives.* The present study is a sequel to that made in 1924. Five seventh-grade language texts published since 1926 have been

analyzed with the purpose of determining answers to the following questions:

What changes in emphasis in the teaching of language and composition are made apparent by comparing the results of the two studies?

To what degree do recent seventh-grade language texts embody progressive tendencies in the teaching of English?

To what extent do these books facilitate the attainment of the special objectives of the junior high school?<sup>1</sup>

In order to make the desired comparison, the same general procedure in analyzing books was followed in both studies. The percentage of space devoted to the several phases of grammar, composition, and literature was determined. The mentions of the progressive tendencies incorporated in the texts were enumerated. Results are not entirely comparable, however, because terms have been redefined and the progressive tendencies have been drawn from a different source.

*Choice of the basis for classification.* The scheme of classifying the subject matter of language-composition texts has been adopted from the earlier study with minor modifications. One major change consists in the redefinition of "study helps"<sup>2</sup> on the basis of suggestions given in the *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, wherein are itemized the steps of an elaborate technique for teaching composition.<sup>3</sup> These have been adopted in the following modified form: motivation, setting up standards, models, selecting topics, organizing, expressing, appraising, revising, and publishing.

The progressive tendencies utilized in the earliest study were drawn from *The Reorganization of English in Secondary Schools*.<sup>3</sup> These have again been employed in checking the objectives which the authors of the five textbooks set forth in foreword or preface.

<sup>1</sup>Within this study, these objectives are considered to be those of the upper grades, irrespective of whether seventh and eighth grades are incorporated in a junior high school or in the traditional eight-grade elementary school.

<sup>2</sup>*Op. cit.*, page 88.

<sup>3</sup>Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 2, 1917.

\*Graduate student.

However more recent statements of current trends in language—composition teaching are available in Pendle'on's *The Social Objectives of School English* and the *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*. The trends itemized in the latter are better organized and more concisely put than those in the former. They are also recent, representative, and definite. For these reasons, the trends summarized in the yearbook have been chosen as the basis of analysis. Inasmuch as they are based on the analyses of courses of study, a comparison with tendencies as shown in recent texts should be valid and illuminating.

The trends are quoted verbatim, but are arranged under the three headings employed in Table III. The number given the tendency in the yearbook appears in parentheses following each quotation.

#### 1. Emphasis

- a. Oral composition is not only an adjunct to written composition but it is an end in itself. (2)
- b. Written composition should usually be short. (3)
- c. Emphasis is given to letter-writing as a socially valuable form of written composition. (4)
- d. Written composition which is merely reproductive or analytical is minimized. (10)
- e. Subjects for oral composition are taken as frequently as possible from the work of other school departments or from extra-curricular activities. (16)
- f. Numerous devices are given for the extension and mastery of vocabulary. (12)
- g. The basic spelling list contains only words in common use. Pupil and class-lists of words supplement this basic list. (13)
- h. Grammar and rhetoric are useful only as they contribute to correct and adequate expression. (11)
- i. There is an elaborate technique for the following: composition assignments; motivation; prevision; first draft; revision; correction; measurement; and preservation (filing). (6)

#### 2. Guidance

- a. There is a definiteness of prescription relating to the mechanics of written composition. (5)
- b. The individual differences revealed by

measurement have been made the basis for remedial work and the attempted reorganization of subject matter for the use of pupils of different levels of ability. (C)

- c. There is wide application of modern measurement instruments. (C)

#### 3. Motivation

- a. Assignment of composition subjects are usually drawn from the life and the experiences of pupils. (7)
- b. Projects are frequently made the basis for oral and written composition. (14)
- c. The work is motivated by means of the audience situation and purposeful activities. (8)
- d. There is full recognition of the value of wholesome extra-curricular activities. (15)<sup>4</sup>

In determining the consistency with which these five recent textbooks facilitate the attainment of the special objectives of the upper grades, standards based on Koos' statement of the functions have been utilized.<sup>5</sup> Only five of the nine itemized functions have been selected as being suited to objective treatment. Relevant excerpts follow in the order of the corresponding line-titles in Table III.

The junior high school is much better adapted than is the traditional organization to (4) exploration for, and (3) recognition of, variation in abilities and interests of pupils. . . . As a consequence of this better teaching and other influences for motivation an improved application of the pupil will result, which (8) will bring for the individual a higher standard of scholarship. This superior application, joined with other agencies, (9) will enlarge the socializing opportunities of the school. . . . (1) Through shortening the period now devoted to tool subjects by elimination of non-essentials, and their more effective presentation by methods scientifically selected, through utilizing the saving thus made for subjects having greater functional possibilities . . . the junior high school may be expected to effect a genuine and appreciable economy of time.

*Definition of terms.*—The procedure in determining the number of mentions in publication is admittedly a subjective one. An attempt to reduce the personal element has been made by defining the types of subject matter and methods of teaching which are considered to be aligned with the specified progressive tendencies and which may aid in the realization of the objectives of the upper grades. It is believed that on the basis of the follow-

<sup>4</sup>*Fifth Yearbook*, page 88-89.

<sup>5</sup>Koos, L. V. *The Junior High School*, pp. 82-83.

ing definitions, several individuals would derive similar results of analysis. Trends in English-teaching which seem self-evident are not defined. The less obvious tendencies and junior high school functions are defined by means of an outline. This lists the types of content and teaching procedure indicative of progressiveness and alignment with upper grade objectives.

1. Extension and mastery of vocabulary
  - a. Learning to use new and richer meanings for words
  - b. Correct pronunciation
  - c. Correct usage
2. Grammar—an aid to expression—Specific directions calling for the use of grammatical facts in composition writing and in life situations
3. Mechanics of written composition
  - a. Manuscript form
  - b. Capitalization; punctuation
  - c. Spelling, syllabication
4. Elaborate technique for written composition.
5. Adaptation to individual differences
  - a. Self-chosen topics
  - b. Self-appraisal; provision for needed practice
  - c. Additional drill for the slow group
  - d. Supplementary assignments for the most capable
6. Objective measurement
  - a. Comparison of objective test scores
  - b. Use of standardized tests and scales
7. Utilization of life experiences
  - a. Topics for composition
  - b. Application and appraisal in life situations
8. Project: a problem arousing pupils to the purposeful planning and execution of a procedure which involves appraisal and improvement through self—or group—activity. (This includes a drill exercise only as it is an integral part of a larger, more inclusive activity.)
9. Utilization of extra-curricular activities
  - a. Dramatic productions presented to other groups
  - b. Publication in the school paper
  - c. Advertising campaigns, posters, etc.
  - d. Excursions to points of interest; e. g., the post office
  - e. Correlation with club work
10. Exploration of interests and abilities
  - a. Pupil-listing of topics of individual interest
  - b. Self- and group-appraisal
  - c. Tryouts for programs

11. Conditions favoring higher standards of scholarship
  - a. Publishing
  - b. Activities initiated, planned, managed by pupils
  - c. Appraisal by pupils on the basis of definite standards
  - d. Practice to eliminate an individual's known errors; to improve skill where improvement is needed
12. Socializing opportunities
  - a. Committee work; group leaders
  - b. Group appraisal and correction
  - c. Projects
  - d. Advertising; publishing
13. Materials of functional value
  - a. Practice to meet known needs and out-of-school demands
  - b. Compositions of practical value
    - (1) Letters requesting information from, or giving it to, actual people
    - (2) Articles for publication
    - (3) Talks furthering the purpose of a project

It is to be noted that one type of subject matter or teaching procedure may facilitate the accomplishment of several aims; e. g., a skillfully handled project may display any or all of the progressive tendencies and help to realize the various objectives of the upper grades.

Another group of terms has required definition. A new feature of the analyzing process is the attempt to determine the type of emphasis given to a progressive tendency in English-teaching or to the functioning of typical upper grade processes. A mention of an activity may be merely incidental. For example, there may be a bare suggestion that the pupil may desire to choose a topic from his own experiences. On the other hand there may be elaborate procedure in promoting this same tendency of suiting instructions to individual differences. To illustrate, a lengthy and detailed account may be addressed to the pupil suggesting that he join the teacher in appraising his work and that he arrange for practice which will meet his needs.

It seemed that the varying kinds of emphasis which textbook assignments give to the tendencies and functions ought to be indicated. Four types of emphasis have been defined and utilized in counting the mentions. The definitions and illustrative examples follow.

Type 1: a bare mention; an explanation of a rule or characteristic without any assigned application by the pupil

(a) A bare mention of a life experience; for example, a parallel between practice for skillful skating and formal drill on correct letter form may be drawn.

(b) Explanation of a rule:  
Notice the use of commas in the conversation between the farmer and his son. The name of the speaker is usually set off from his speech by a comma.

Type 2: Specific directions guiding practice and application; for example:  
In these sentences improve the verbs printed in italics.

Type 3: The use of a model in setting up standards and guiding revision.<sup>6</sup>  
Now prepare to write a dialogue. The selection following will guide you. Page seventeen gives suggestions which may help you in choosing suitable subject matter. Notice that a change in speakers is shown by a new paragraph. Is each separate sentence inclosed in quotation marks? Do the words of the speaker always come before or after his name? Can you suggest more expressive and exact wording?

Type 4: Self-direction by the pupil or the class; appraisal by the writer, his audience, or both.  
You probably notice that you still are making the errors that you discovered early in the term. The other pupils have probably noticed the same fact concerning their own speech. Perhaps you would like to form into committees of friendly service. The duties will be to watch over and correct the speech of fellow committee members—always in a kindly and helpful way. Perhaps you and your teacher can work out a plan for keeping account of errors and the progress you make in overcoming them.

*The technique of the study: Page-spacing.*  
—In general the system of classifying the phases of grammar, literature, and composition is the same as that employed in the study made in 1924. The following outline presents the departure from the earlier study and sets

forth the procedure followed when analyzing.

#### A. Departure from the earlier study

##### 1. Omissions

- a. Paragraph and whole composition
- b. Forms of discourse<sup>7</sup>
- c. How to read

2. Modification: Assignment for written and oral work—only directions to begin actual work

##### 3. Additions

- a. Grammar: pronunciation
- b. Study helps
  - (1) Motivation
  - (2) Setting standards
  - (3) Organizing
  - (4) Expressing
  - (5) Appraising
  - (6) Revising
  - (7) Publishing

#### B. Mechanical procedure

##### 1. Use of tabulation sheet

- a. Items listed down left margin
- b. Page-portions noted horizontally to the right of the names of the corresponding items; separation of adjacent numbers by a comma

2. Page-by-page progress through a text, apportioning to each item its quota of space

##### 3. Method of counting and of notation

- a. Whole pages noted by Roman numerals
- b. Part-pages noted as lines in Arabic numerals; equated by considering each thirty lines a page

4. Illustrations — untabulated unless serving as models; e. g., letter forms

5. Check: Grand total of page-spacing closely approximating the number of pages in the text.

*The technique of the study: Mentions.*—The next portion of the outline suggests again the sources of the statement of progressive tendencies and of the functions of the upper grades. It also sets forth the procedure followed in analyzing.

#### Items

##### A. Sources

- 1. *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, pages 88 to 109
- 2. Koos, *The Junior High School*, pages 82 to 83

##### B. Definitions of tendencies

(Continued on Page 48)

<sup>6</sup>The use of a model is counted as being degree 4 when the related assignment is of the pupil-directed sort.

<sup>7</sup>Given the same treatment as oral and written composition.



## MAY THE CHILD SPEAK?

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**S**TRANGELY enough, there are educators who are urging that the whole complicated problem of oral English teaching be given up as unworthy of consideration or as being hopelessly involved. That ills may befall children in the average oral English class may readily be granted; but oral English work, rightly conceived, offers experience in social situations which reproduce the difficulties of social adjustments outside of school. Defective speech, extreme shyness, that terrible social affliction called stage-fright, are examples of ills which may be effectively dealt with in intelligently-taught oral English.

Administrators and teachers are getting away, more and more, from the use of repressive and restraining methods of dealing with so-called discipline and personality problems, for they realize that such means are not rational, not constructive, and are unavailing.

Educational institutions of America have slowly evolved from lump bodies more or less crudely adaptive to merest "book-learning" situations. As society has become more complex and sedentary in its character, schools, by degrees, have taken on functions of particular adjustment to physiological needs among children. Most educators perceive that mental hygiene promises to become the perceptive apparatus of schools, the means by which necessary and desirable adjustments to children's social ills may be realized. When mental hygiene is more fully understood institutions of learning should be enabled to act with greater clarity of understanding, greater economy of effort, and happier results in correcting social deformity and disease.

Concomitant with the understanding of mental hygiene should be a realization that speech is the most delicately constructed and the most sensitive indicator of social well-being, and consequently, is of supreme importance. Speech hygiene is the very retina by means of which social diseases and deformities may be perceived and, hence, corrected.

Of all the subjects offered in our schools—elementary, high, and academic—oral English, or speech, is the one which most satisfactorily and completely opens the way for presenting speech hygiene to children. Recognition by educators of the importance and significance of speech will make possible the scientific handling of behavior problems through speech teaching. Speech hygiene, the core of that

teaching, is the application of mental hygiene to promote, through speech, ideal social conditions. The goal of mental hygiene is to prevent development of freakish, abnormal, insufferable personalities; whereas the purpose of speech hygiene is, having developed normal personalities, to promote their power to regulate the social order of which they are a part.

Speech hygiene is scientific, not superstitious in character; it deals with educational problems by means of knowledge of reality, not by mere clashing of emotions of individuals concerned. It bids fair to bring the most economical and effective method of discipline into use—guidance to self-control through self-knowledge—and so to attain and maintain in school rooms themselves conditions conducive to later adult social health—the possession of physical and mental poise, fearlessness in the face of reality, power to influence others by effectively revealing actuality to them, and ability to co-operate with them in changing social conditions for the good of all.

Is the speech activity of profound significance and primary importance? What is the opinion of workers already in the field, meeting the social needs of children, adolescents, and adults? With the increase of knowledge in the field of abnormal speech, comes the realization that the whole physical, mental, and emotional life is bound up in speech activities, that the training for speech is the training for life, that the voice is a most delicate indicator of physical health, of emotional conflicts, of mental weaknesses and illnesses, and of general social adjustments. If the life of an individual is thin, pinched, meager, harsh, slovenly, rich, mellow, controlled, his speech is apt to be similar in tone. In support of this, one may quote almost indefinitely the opinions of men and women who are devoting themselves to finding effective remedies for all types of speech difficulties: Dr. Smiley Blanton and Margaret Gray Blanton, now in charge of the Child Guidance Clinic at Vassar College; Mr. W. J. Farma of New York University; Dr. R. W. West of the University of Wisconsin; Sarah M. Stinchfield of Mount Holyoke; Mr. J. M. O'Neill of the University of Michigan; Dr. A. Weaver of the University of Wisconsin; Mr. F. M. Rarig of the University of Minnesota; Mr. C. H. Woolbert of the University of Iowa; Miss Alice C. Chapin, in charge of speech defect work in the Los An-

geles schools; Miss Lavilla C. Ward, State Supervisor of Speech Correction, Wisconsin; Mr. G. W. Gray of the University of Iowa; and there are many others throughout the country. The sum total of opinions expressed by these experts forms a consensus that, as Mr. Farma expresses it, "The speech class room offers the greatest opportunities for training in socializing the personality, in stabilizing unbalanced emotions, in achieving harmony between the conscious and unconscious forces in the individual, all this with social adaptability as the end."

A few questions may open the way to a more clearly formulated opinion among educators of oral English or speech:

1. What other curricular subject affords as great opportunity as does speech for dealing directly and influentially with the student as an individual in a social environment?
2. What other subject opens the way so completely to helping a student make adjustment to conditions within himself and to conditions in his environment?
3. In what other department of educational work can the teacher so quickly meet the compelling social needs of all the children?
4. Where else as fully as in speech-work can the teacher experience what Miss Stinchfield calls the "great joy of teaching—to see children unfolding into noble social personalities"?

5. In what other department of educational work can the teacher, too, so fully develop social qualities himself as through the constant necessary practice of understanding and controlling self in relation to others, of gaining social power through studying, analyzing, and dealing with a great variety of cases of maladjustment, and through realizing richness of experience by successfully and sympathetically co-operating with others for their welfare?

Educators will find it profitable to seek answers to these questions, for the reason that such investigation will end in recognition of the superiority of speech in fulfilling these social needs. Although mental hygiene may be presented aside from speech work, experience makes reasonable the claim that the fullest and most logical application of mental hygiene may be made in the teaching of speech. The basis on which to proceed is a recognition of the significance of the speech problem. In solving any child's problem, one must combine sympathy with scientific understanding. The personality of the child must be held sacred; it must not be dealt with in any trifling, indifferent, or ignorant spirit. The remedial measures must aim at helping him to set up habits of the right kind, at helping him to make all the necessary adjustments with himself and with other persons. What could be more practical or useful?

#### WHAT TO EMPHASIZE IN NEW POETRY

(Continued from Page 36)

method. The first is to help the child to realize words and phrases foreign to his ordinary way of talking. The second is to take for granted that he can follow the poetic trail before him. If on his return he wants to talk about his adventures, well and good. But do

not insist on his telling you in prose what he has met with. The initiative must be with the child. May I emphasize for teachers the futility of emphasis when they have once introduced good poetry to curious children? The friendship should grow of its own accord.

#### LANGUAGE TEXT BOOKS

(Continued from Page 46)

##### Types of emphasis

- A. Type 1: a bare mention
- B. Type 2: explicit directions
- C. Type 3: guidance based on a model
- D. Type 4: guidance leading to independent planning, execution, appraisal, and revision by pupils

##### Mechanical procedure

##### A. Notation on the margin of the text

1. Type of emphasis
2. Letters symbolizing the tendencies mentioned. (See letters preceding line-titles in Table III)
3. Example: 4s: Pupil-appraisal as a means of raising standards

(Continued on Page 52)

# WHAT IS GOOD FRACTION DRILL?

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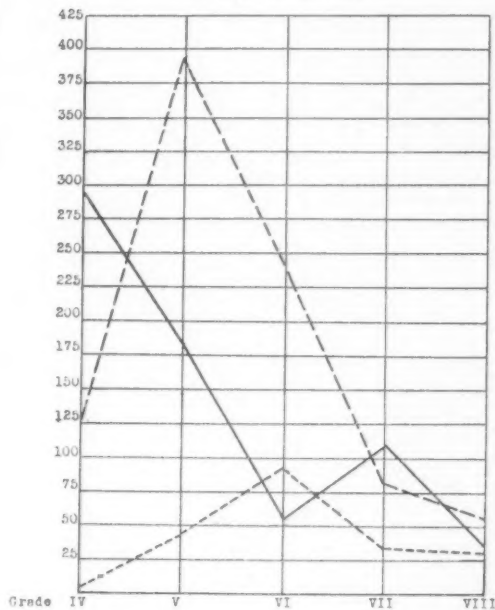
THE TOTAL learning situation with respect to fractions involves two types of drill: drill for instructional purposes, and drill for the purpose of maintaining skills. The purpose of the first type of drill is that of developing on the part of the pupil a given skill, such as, the addition of similar fractions, the addition of fractions with the common denominator present, etc. The purpose of the second type of drill is that of providing opportunity for the use of skills after they have been learned, so that they may become a permanent acquisition on the part of the pupil, ready for use whenever a situation involving these skills arises.

Textbooks in current use provide each of these types of drill in varying amounts. The present article is concerned primarily with the latter type and proposes to set up certain considerations which should enter into the construction of drill materials designed to gear in with the materials supplied by the textbooks already in the hands of the pupils, as opposed to the drill materials that have been constructed without regard to a specific series of arithmetics.

The need for specific drill materials that are designed to gear in with the materials presented by a particular series of arithmetics becomes apparent when the data resulting from analyses of the practice provided by series of arithmetics are examined.<sup>1</sup> Series of arithmetics vary within wide limits in the amount of practice they provide for a given process in fractions; the nature of the practice they provide shows wide variation, and there is marked variation in the manner in which they distribute their practice. Since the series of arithmetics that is in the hands of the pupils furnishes, in the vast majority of classroom situations, the basis for the course in arithmetic, exact knowledge of the character of the practice provided by the series of arithmetics in use is of prime importance to the construction of effective and economical supplementary drill materials. Such material should promote efficient learning, reduce losses

due to the necessity for relearning because of forgetting or underlearning, and prevent wasteful overlearning.

The Distribution of the Practice in the Addition of Common Fractions and Mixed Numbers Provided by Three Series of Arithmetics for Grades IV to VIII.



The excellent specifications for drill materials presented by Dr. F. B. Knight in the *THIRD YEARBOOK OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENCE* provide a definite procedure for the construction of supplementary drill materials with respect to the general character of such materials. The application of these specifications to a given situation involves an analysis of the textbook in use.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Practice is defined as the general term which includes both of the types of drill mentioned above.

<sup>2</sup>For analyses of the practice provided in the four fundamental processes in common fractions by nine series of arithmetics in current use, the reader is referred to a study by the writer, that is on file at the Education Library, State University of Iowa.

The data presented in this article show how the practice in the addition of common fractions varies in amount, nature, and manner of distribution for three series of arithmetics. They will also serve to show that a drill service constructed in general cannot be nearly as effective for the purpose of learning as a drill service that is designed to fit a specific series of textbooks.

#### *Variation in the Amount of Practice*

The graph indicates the variation in the amount of practice in the addition of common fractions and mixed numbers as provided by three series of arithmetics for Grades IV to VIII. The solid line indicates the practice provided by Series A. The long dashes indicate the practice provided by Series G, and the short dashes indicate the practice provided by Series H. The total amount of practice provided by each series is as follows: Series A, 680 practices; Series G, 892 practices; and Series H, 204 practices.

Table I shows the number of practices provided for the addition of common fractions and mixed numbers for Grades IV to VIII, inclusive, for three series of arithmetics.

**Table I.**

Grade	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
Series A .....	294	184	54	111	37	680
Series G .....	128	384	242	82	56	892
Series H .....	4	43	93	33	31	204

These data show that Series A provides more than three times as much practice as Series H, and that Series G provides more than four times as much as Series H. From the point of view of sheer amounts of drill it is obvious that pupils studying from these series of arithmetics will not require the same amount of drill in the supplementary drill service. It can readily be seen that if the same drill service for the addition of fractions and mixed numbers is used with Series A, G, and H, that pupils using Series G may be wasting time in overlearning. This may also be true for pupils using Series A, but pupils using Series H may not be receiving enough drill. On the other hand, if pupils using Series G need the service of supplementary drill materials for the addition of fractions and mixed

numbers, then the amounts of drill required by pupils using Series A and H cannot be the same. Thus, it is evident that the gross amount of drill provided by a drill service should vary in accordance with the amount of practice provided by the series of arithmetics in the hands of the pupils.

A further consideration of these data reveals that none of these series emphasizes the addition of fractions in the same grade. Series A places the emphasis in Grade IV, Series G in Grade V and Series H in Grade VI. If the same drill service is used with each of these series of textbooks it is clear that it could supply drill exercises that would be too difficult for pupils using Series G and H, and at the same time the drill could be too simple to challenge the interest of pupils using Series A. It is apparent that such drill is not conducive to effective learning. Drill service, if it is to promote effective learning, must be adjusted to the plan upon which the series of arithmetics in the hands of the pupils was constructed. The general drill service is not adjusted to such variations as are shown to exist here, and hence fails in its purpose to the extent that it is out of such adjustment.

#### *Variation in the Nature of the Drill*

Tables II to IV, inclusive, will serve to show the variation that exists in textbooks in regard to the nature of the practice they provide. Space will not permit of presenting more elaborate tables showing the variation that exists in the form of the example, the number of the addends, the nature of the denominators, and the nature of the sums. Each of these involves different skills, and in constructing a complete drill service, each should be given consideration, for the practice provided for these skills shows variations just as the practice provided the different combinations of addends shows variation. For our present purpose the variation in the practice provided the different types of addends will serve to show the necessity for varying the nature of the drill exercises provided by a supplementary drill service in accordance with the practice provided by the textbook in use.

Table II is read as follows: Series A provides Grade IV, 112 practices for the addition of proper fractions, 4 practices for the addition of proper fractions and a whole number, 3 practices for the addition of a proper frac-



tion and a mixed number, 69 practices for the addition of mixed numbers, etc. Tables III and IV are read in the same manner. An examination of the tables shows that Series A and H provide no practice at all for some combinations of addends in certain grades. The practice provided for other combinations is relatively meagre.

**Table II.****SERIES A**

*The Number of Practices Provided for Each Combination of Addends*

Grade	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Totals
Proper fractions .....	112	56	39	53		260
Proper fractions and wh. no. ....	4				1	5
Proper fractions and mix. no. ....	3	6	2	5	20	36
All mixed no. ....	69	107	8	17	6	207
Mixed no. and wh. no. ....	95	14	5	35	10	159
Proper fract., wh. no., mix. no. ....	11	1		1		13
Totals .....	294	184	54	111	37	680

**Table III.****SERIES G**

*The Number of Practices Provided for Each Combination of Addends*

Grade	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Totals
Proper fractions .....	55	195	89	28	16	383
Proper fractions and wh. no. ....	20	8	5	2	1	36
Proper fractions and mix. no. ....	14	41	28	14	10	107
All mixed no. ....	26	84	81	16	16	223
Mixed no. and wh. no. ....	10	45	34	15	7	111
Proper fract., wh. no., mix. no. ....	3	11	5	7	6	32
Totals .....	128	384	242	82	56	892

**Table IV.****SERIES H**

*The Number of Practices Provided for Each Combination of Addends*

Grade	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Totals
Proper fractions .....	3	10	50	2	20	85
Proper fractions and wh. no. ....			1	1		2
Proper fractions and mix. no. ....	1		4			5
All mixed no. ....		16	35	17	8	76
Mixed no. and wh. no. ....		17	3	13	3	36
Proper fract., wh. no., mix. no. ....						
Totals .....	4	43	93	33	31	204

It is not necessary to provide equal amounts of practice for all combinations, but to assume that a transfer of training takes place to such an extent that it is not necessary to provide practice for some combinations at all, places a

greater confidence in the theory of the transfer of training than the facts justify. Series G evidently attempts to provide practice for each combination of addends. Constructing a drill service for this series of arithmetics presents a different problem than that presented by either Series A or H.

The first specification for drill material is that drill should be on the entire process. Series A and H are weak in that they fail to provide practice on all of the combinations of addends. In the construction of the supplementary drill service for these series of arithmetics those combinations of addends neglected by the textbook should be given consideration. The general drill service could easily provide additional practice for those combinations which are emphasized in the textbooks, and neglect to provide practice when the practice in the textbooks is weak, thus failing to modify materially the pupil's command over the entire process.

The data also show that the supplementary drill service should be modified from grade to grade. Series A is weak in the practice it provides for Grade VI in that it provides very little practice for that grade, and the practice it does provide is largely confined to the addition of proper fractions. In Grade VIII it neglects to provide any practice at all for the addition of proper fractions. It is also clear that the drill service provided for Series A in Grade VII should differ from that provided for Grade VI and VIII. Series H is weak in the maintenance program for the process as a whole in all grades and especially in Grades VII and VIII, which are the grades which follow the major drive on the addition of fractions for this series. The significant fact is that each series of arithmetics presents an individual problem in the construction of a drill service that is calculated to gear in with the practice provided by the series itself.

*Variation in the Distribution of Practice*

A second specification for drill is that drill should come frequently in small amounts. The following table (Table V) was developed for the purpose of determining the manner in which textbooks distributed their practice. The sections are comparable in the amount of time pupils would spend upon them, since the portion of each series that was allotted to each grade was divided into ten sections, and the remaining number of pages was assigned to Section 11. For example, if the portion of a series of arithmetics allotted to Grade V con-

tained 122 pages, each section for that grade contains twelve pages, and Section 11 contains two pages.

**Table V.**  
**The Distribution of Practice**

SERIES A					
Sections	Grade VI	Grade V	Grade VI	Grade VII	Grade VIII
1 .....		64	19	68	15
2 .....		31	1		11
3 .....	1	2	4		
4 .....		27	1	1	
5 .....		4	20		1
6 .....	1	12			
7 .....		1	7	4	
8 .....	136	2		34	
9 .....	65	3		2	8
10 .....	91	34		1	1
11 .....		4	2	1	1
Totals .....	294	184	54	111	37

SERIES G					
Sections	Grade VI	Grade V	Grade VI	Grade VII	Grade VIII
1 .....			27	7	7
2 .....		148	7	7	4
3 .....		113	8	1	3
4 .....	13	9	10	5	3
5 .....	1	18	11	9	7
6 .....	1	44	9	4	6
7 .....		13	15	4	3
8 .....	109	19	22	4	2
9 .....	4	4	19	3	
10 .....			60	38	21
11 .....		16	54		
Totals .....	128	384	242	82	56

SERIES H					
Sections	Grade VI	Grade V	Grade VI	Grade VII	Grade VIII
1 .....			12	19	4
2 .....			68		1
3 .....			2	3	
4 .....	4	20	2	7	
5 .....		17	1	1	1
6 .....		2	2	1	1
7 .....		2			2
8 .....			1		
9 .....				1	20
10 .....			5	1	
11 .....					2
Totals .....	4	43	93	33	31

Table V is read as follows: Series A provides one practice in Section 3 of the portion of the textbook for Grade IV, one practice in Section 6, 136 practices in Section 8, 65 practices in Section 9, 91 practices in Section 10. The total number of practices for Grade IV is 294 practices. For Grade V it provides 64 practices in the first section, etc.

Each of these series of arithmetics presents marked contrasts to the others in the manner in which it distributes its practice. From this point of view it is apparent that the general drill service could again fail in its purpose as

it could supply drill when it was not needed and fail to supply it when it was needed for the purpose of offsetting forgetting. Series A and H tend to concentrate their practice and permit long periods to exist in which relatively little or no practice occurs. A drill service calculated to offset forgetting would supply drill exercises when the textbook fails to do so, and would not supply drill when it was supplied by the textbook, unless such drill provided for weaknesses in the nature of the practice provided by the textbook or was designed to increase the gross amount of practice provided by the textbook.

Table V shows where the maintenance programs in these textbooks are weak. With this information at hand the supplementary drill materials can be constructed to bridge the gaps and thus strengthen the entire program.

#### Summary

Additional drill in itself will not necessarily promote effective learning. Apparently many drill services are constructed upon this theory. Good fraction drill will be scientifically constructed according to the specifications for drill materials. It will be designed to supplement the practice provided by a given series of arithmetics with respect to the amount of the practice the series provides, in order to prevent underlearning. It will recognize the plan upon which the textbook is constructed with respect to the grade placement of the instructional materials in the textbook, in order to avoid drill that would be too easy or too difficult for the pupils using the drill materials. The nature of the drill exercises will vary with the nature of the practice provided by the textbook in order to provide practice on the entire process. It will vary in amount and nature from grade to grade as the materials in the textbook vary from grade to grade, in order that an adequate maintenance program may be maintained in each grade. The distribution of the drill exercises within a given grade will vary with the distribution in the textbook in order to offset forgetting.

#### LANGUAGE TEXT BOOKS

(Continued from Page 48)

#### B. Notation on tabulation sheet

- Names of texts along left margin—each given four horizontal spaces to represent the four types of emphasis

- on each of the tendencies
- Tendencies used as column headings
- A tally for each mention

(Part II will be published in March.)

# EDITORIALS

## *By-Paths from February Birthdays*

**F**EBRUARY is a month when teachers must be on their guard against poor material in biography, and against wrong classroom methods in the use of even biographical masterpieces. But with good material in sight, the problem of appropriate choice of subject is a serious one.

Theoretically, biography and autobiography should be the staff of life to young persons. But actually, youth is more interested in its own experiences than in the experiences of others. Adults enjoy reminiscent literature which rejuvenates their past for them much more than children enjoy this same literature presented prospectively, as a guide to their future.

Children, however, are not devoid of qualities which make possible an absorbing interest in biographical literature. They have a strong predilection to hero-worship. There is in them an inclination toward the romantic which establishes a bond with biography and autobiography provided that the right contacts are made with these predispositions.

It is important that the reading of biography by children be an active experience, or as nearly so as possible. They should take up these books with the zest and enthusiasm that they do books in the observance of Children's Book Week. Their pleasure in reading should not only be vicarious, but dramatic.

Carl Sandburg's *ABE LINCOLN GROWS UP* may be interpreted by them as a series of dramatic episodes. Biography should not be taught to children didactically, nor should children be allowed to become priggish in their interpretations of biography, as they so easily do under the influence of adults. Instead they should be given full opportunity to recreate some of the chapters they read dramatically and spontaneously.

February should be a time of introduction to the absorbing personalities of the past. Considerable range should be encouraged in the choice of biography and autobiography in order to harmonize the reading with the personal tastes, interests, and experiences of children.

The February program, then, should by no means be confined (as is so frequently true) to the stories of men and women whose birthdays come in this month. Once the idea of birthdays has been introduced, the wider out-

look should at once be allowed. How deadely it is for children to retell and declaim, year after year, the virtues of a few national heroes and writers. George Washington, the fox-hunting country gentleman, need not be the only personality recognized this month. Why should children not read also of Roosevelt, antelope hunting, or facing a grizzly in Edwin Emerson's *ADVENTURES OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT* (Dutton, 1928)? For adventure-loving boys, the story of *LONG LANCE*, by Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance (Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1928) will prove of absorbing interest, with its narrative of Indian life in the Northwest.

Stories of Lincoln's early years will naturally lead the young reader to Stewart Edward White's stirring account of the Kentucky wilderness in *DANIEL BOONE, WILDERNESS SCOUT* (Doubleday, 1926).

Nor do the by-paths leading from February birthdays stop with biography. There is history, as thrilling as fiction, and in many cases printed and bound as attractively as it deserves to be. Longmans, Green have issued an edition of Prescott's *CONQUEST OF MEXICO*, by Andrew Lang, with illustrations by James Daugherty, under the title of *THE CONQUEST OF MONTEZUMA'S EMPIRE* which puts within reach of boys and girls one of the most romantic stories of the new world. Nor is the science of government without lively interest for young people. February reading may lead to such delightful accounts of the foundations of our government as Hermann Hagedorn's *TEN DREAMS OF ZACH PETERS* (Winston, 1927) which vivifies the meaning of the Constitution of the United States much as biography vivifies its history.

An exceedingly attractive guide to these by-paths has recently been published by the City Schools of Long Beach, California, under the direction of Miss E. Riddell White, Director of Junior High School Libraries. Miss White explains, in a letter, that "The whole emphasis is thrown on attractive introduction and reading for pleasure. The changes were made at the unanimous request of all the junior high school librarians who found that the topical graded arrangement limited the range of the children's reading." This reading guide, entitled simply *BOOKS*, is illustrated, and each title is accompanied by a brief description.

## REVIEWS and ABSTRACTS

THE AMERICAN LIFE SERIES: KIPWILLIE, FANTON FARM, INLAND OCEANS, TONGO, BEN BIDWELL, SIXTY YEARS AGO. By George Philip Krapp. Illustrated by Philip Von Saltza. Chicago. Rand, McNally, 1927.

THE HILL BILLY KID. By Frank E. Wilson. Chicago. Rand, McNally. 1927.

A fine example of what may be done with a series of books to make them look different and attract the attention of the reader is furnished by a group of books lately published under the general title of THE AMERICAN LIFE SERIES.

The binding, type, and format of these volumes are attractive; the books seem designed to withstand much handling by boys and girls. Philip Von Saltza's many pencil illustrations are noticeable for their clearness in detail as well as for their simplicity and suitability.

The stories are of value as supplements to both history and geography, and are told in clear, concise English. Mr. Krapp has three children of his own; he knows children, especially American children, and he knows what most American children like.

KIPWILLIE is the story of the life of a small city boy and his dog, Trouble. To the child who lives in a snowless region as well as to the child who has experienced Northern winters, a great deal of enjoyment may be obtained from the tale of Kipwillie's and Betty's fun in the snow. This story will fascinate children of six years and up.

FANTON FARM—do you remember the first circus parade you ever saw? If so, you will enjoy seeing it again through the eyes of Prince, Farmer Fanton's horse. Most farm lives are just as interesting as the one at Fanton Farm but this story is exceptional because it is so well told.

INLAND OCEANS is quite a contrast to the first two stories, for while they give the life of the average city and country child, this one deals with the summer vacation of a family, from the time their ship steams out of Buffalo and passes through four of the Great Lakes until it ends with several weeks of

camping among the islands of Lake Superior and a trip home across Lake Michigan. This book furnishes splendid and delightful supplementary material to a class studying the geography of the Great Lakes.

The last three books of the series depict the life of children from sixty to one hundred twenty-five years ago in a manner which eight-year-olds will like and adults can enjoy. These have historical value. Careful checking with a copy of the original JOURNALS of Lewis and Clark shows that they are authentic.

In the narrative of TONGO a good picture of the life of the plains as seen by the members of the Lewis and Clark expedition is given. Such slight changes and additions as have been made from the Lewis and Clark JOURNALS are for the sake of presenting the material in narrative form. Very exciting is the description of the prairie fire and the ingenious way in which Blind Beaver saved her small papoose. This incident is referred to in the Lewis and Clark JOURNALS, as is the story of the boy who spent the night alone in a blizzard, and others.

Indian life, its charm, its pathos and its hardships are delightfully told through the story of BEN BIDWELL, a boy who was captured by the Indians of Ohio and lived with them for about a year, while SIXTY YEARS AGO deals with the Civil War.

To those who like the events of a story to move rapidly, Joe Wentworth's experience while in the clutches of the Night Riders and afterwards, and the solution of two mysteries as told in THE HILL BILLY KID, will prove fascinating reading.

A study of reference material in the library shows that the events of the story are not unlikely. It is a known fact that in Kentucky the Planter's Association attempted to pool the tobacco crop for a higher price to combat the Tobacco Trust; and that those who were not members of the association had their crops destroyed. The story is built upon this fact. Its chief value is in the lesson in citizenship which it offers and the thrill of adventure which it gives.



Mr. Krapp and Mr. Wilson may have been writing their books for boys but they would also please girls and adults.

*Ruth M. Blackman.*

THE RED HORSE. By Elsa Moeschlin. New York. Coward, McCann. 1928.

Little children, who have not, in the past, been lavishly served with story-books, are lately receiving a good deal of attention from the publishing world, if one is to judge by the attractive books issuing from the presses of the country.

Among the most attractive of the recent stories for young children is THE RED HORSE. The story of Trott-trott, who was "carved out of pine wood and painted red," and of his master, Peter, will delight many young readers, in spite of the end—"which isn't as gay as the rest of this story, for life isn't always gay."

The illustrations are colorful, and the book is beautifully printed.

*D. B.*

WANLNOTH THE WANDERER. By H. Escott-Inmann. New edition. Illustrated by James Daugherty. New York. Longmans, Green. 1928.

"The song of Wulnoth, the born thrall, who was called the Wanderer; the song of the nameless and landless man who aided two kings to gain kingdoms." In this fashion, the foreword states the theme of the story. The tale, which deals with the Vikings of Denmark, their invasion of England, and their eventual submission to King Alfred abounds in fights, feats of strength and courage, and miraculous escapes from treacherous enemies. It contains excitement enough for almost any thrill-devouring boy, and has the virtues of authentic historical background and rhythmic, saga-like prose.

*D. B.*

# REFERENCES FOR FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

(Continued from Page 42)

and connected with definite localities, with the house, church, fort, tree or monument that marks the place. Presents material in an interesting way and has many good illustrations."

—Where Washington Lived in Cambridge, Mass., 255.

—With Washington at Valley Forge, 284.

—Washington's Headquarters at Morristown, N. J., 297.

—Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh, N. Y., 310.

*Gordy: LEADERS IN MAKING AMERICA*

. . . . . Grades 4-6

"Elementary history of U. S., biographical and social in emphasis and interesting in presentation of material. Numerous illustrations."

—George Washington, Commander-in-chief of our army, 171-194.

*Guerber: STORY OF THE THIRTEEN*

COLONIES . . . . . Grades 5-6

"From the discovery by the Norsemen

through the Revolutionary War."

—Washington's Boyhood, 191.

—Washington's Journey, 195.

—Washington's First Battle, 198.

*McBrien: AMERICA FIRST . . . . . Grades 5-6*

—Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, 151.

—Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, 255.

*McMurry: PIONEERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY . . . . . Grades 5-6*

—Lincoln's Early Life in Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois, 170-184.

*Tappan: AMERICAN HISTORY STORIES*

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"A very clear and concise rendering of the high lights in our history."

—George Washington, Father of his country, 80.

*Tomlinson: BOYS OF THE REVOLUTION*

. . . . . Grades 5-6

Exploits of young Americans.

—How George Washington Was Made Commander-in-Chief, 1-9.

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